

National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration

**Headquarters**

Washington, DC 20546-0001



July 2, 2004

Reply to Attn of:

GG

TO: Distribution

FROM: G/Alternate Designated Agency Ethics Official

SUBJECT: Blanket Determination Regarding Attendance at the Aura Launch, July 9, 2004

The Boeing Company and Northrup Grumman Corporation are hosting a reception prior to the Aura Launch, scheduled for July 10, 2004. The event will be held at the Royal Scandinavian Inn in Solvang, California on July 9, 2004, from 5 to 7 p.m. Approximately 300-500 people are expected to attend the event. Refreshments will be served at this event and the cost is approximately \$20 per person. I have determined it to be in the best interests of the Government for those NASA employees who are invited to this event to attend in their official capacities and as representatives of NASA.

The launch of the Aura spacecraft is the latest in the Earth Orbiting System (EOS) series of satellites and is designed to study changes in the Earth's atmosphere. The Aura satellite is the product of an international collaborative effort with the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Finland. Boeing and Northrup Grumman have been highly involved in the production and launch of NASA's Aura satellite. Boeing provided the launch vehicle, a Delta II rocket, and Northrup Grumman was responsible for building the spacecraft. In addition to NASA representatives, attendance at the event will include representatives from the space industry, the education field, and foreign space agencies.

I find that the event meets the requirements of a widely attended gathering as defined in 5 CFR 635.204(g). Because of NASA's interest in this technical collaboration and in the important scientific objectives of the Aura satellite once in space, I conclude that NASA's interest in its employees attending this event outweighs the concerns that acceptance of the gift (refreshments) may appear to improperly influence any NASA personnel in the performance of their official duties.

Accordingly, NASA invitees and their invited spouses or guests may attend this event without charge.

  
R. Andrew Falcon